



**COL. KATHIE CLOSE**  
377th Air Base Wing commander

## Outstanding service from optometry Airman

I want to let the 377th Medical Group staff and everyone else know the Optometry Clinic, though obviously undermanned, is providing outstanding support to its customers.

I walked in to see if I could get my military glasses fixed and a prescription checked—no appointment. Airman 1st Class Joseph Krzywicki took care of everything for me and juggled customer after customer with such a great attitude that I couldn't help thinking, "This kid is in the right business!"

It wasn't only the attitude that impressed me though. He was very thorough, efficient, professional, and never once showed any signs of being stressed or annoyed by the constant phone calls and questions while he took care of everyone.

Unfortunately, I don't see this kind of customer service too often anymore. It was really refreshing and encouraging to see it from mature and intelligent young airman under less than ideal conditions.

## Discontent with Commissary baggers

My colleagues and I are continuously trading stories of discontent concerning our Commissary baggers.

I know they work for tips only and many are retired military. They are quick to mention these facts. I am not compelled enough to write down their bagger ID numbers and make a specific complaint, as this is a blanket inquiry for the entire bagger staff.

# FORUM

**kirtlandcc.forum@kirtland.af.mil, 846-4240**

What concerns me is the caliber of treatment received by our enlisted force. I feel we are being "strong armed" into providing above average tips for average service. If the tip provided is not acceptable to the bagger, they have been known to slam the trunk of the car, turn around without any thanks, or simply mumble something and walk off.

Don't get me wrong, I tip decently for decent service. I have always provided a tip of some sort for even the basic services. Most of our enlisted members are on some sort of budget and can't provide large monetary tips. I think the baggers sometimes lose track of this and think of us as mere tips, not military people on a budget. At times I could use the money provided for the tip to replace the damaged and bruised items caused by the baggers.

The last time I checked, we are the lowest paid people on the base and need the Commissary the most. If a tip isn't received, maybe it's actually due to poor service or lack of money, not because we are rude.

What are the simple rules expected for tipping? The concept of tipping is not automatic, it's appreciation of services rendered. Visiting our Commissary shouldn't make us uncomfortable.

I apologize for the treatment you and your friends received from certain baggers at the Commissary. Baggers are independent contractors and have a contract with the 377th Mission Support Group to perform bagging service at the Commissary. The head bagger is responsible for ensuring baggers treat customers appropriately.

However, if a bagger number, located on your grocery receipt and also worn by the bagger, can be provided to the store manager or the head bagger, immediate action can be taken. If at any time a bagger mistreats you or anyone else, please notify either the store manager or the head bagger and provide them with the bagger number.

There are no specific "rules for

tipping." As you stated in your message, tipping is a show of appreciation by the customer for services rendered. Patrons may also request a specific bagger or bag their groceries themselves.

## Military Clothing Sales stock not satisfactory

The Military Clothing Sales Store is frequently out of needed, high-demand items such as rank and accessories. They have plenty of colonel and general officer material, but for the rest of us, it's a gamble.

A month ago I wrote a letter to the Army and Air Force Exchange Service manager with these concerns. I was never contacted by the manager and the problem persists.

Yesterday, I experienced more of the same when, in preparation for all the upcoming awards banquets, I went to buy a mini-medal holder and the small bronze stars for the mini-medals, and the store was out of the items.

When I spoke to the manager, the result was, "Well, when we have a run on things..." No apology or sense of remorse in her tone whatsoever. This is completely unacceptable and a failure to apply common sense and simple business practices.

Thanks for the opportunity to improve our service at the Military Clothing Sales Store. You have identified some concerns and areas we need to improve. Our goal is to maintain product availability of high demand items, yet there are times when we miss the mark.

The store management is alert to the military needs and regularly contacts other bases to have items air shipped for the needs of our customers.

You have my commitment to work on improvements in these areas.

## Security forces should obey rules also

Would you please pass to the Security Forces that they should drive more carefully and be examples of good driving.

This morning, at a three-way

stop, I came to the intersection at the same time a Mitsubishi SUV, driven by a male wearing a policeman's hat. He didn't stop completely at the three-way stop and he was talking on the cell phone all at the same time. So, that doesn't set a good example if he is supposed to enforce the law but doesn't abide by it himself.

Please bring to their attention that people are watching and they expect their cops to drive lawfully and carefully, not sloppily.

I share your feelings and have recently published an article in the Nucleus to gain more awareness on this issue. Unless dispatched to an emergency, members of the 377th Security Forces Squadron are required to obey the same rules as everyone else driving on the base and they receive tickets when they are caught violating the rules. This is done both to ensure public safety and to maintain a positive public image of the unit.

The security forces commander, first sergeant and supervisors review unit personnel violations and take prompt and decisive action to ensure they are not repeated.

## Contacting Forum

We want your suggestions and comments concerning Kirtland AFB. Give base agencies or the chain of command the chance to resolve your concern before calling Forum. Callers' names won't be printed.

### Write:

377th ABW/CC Forum  
2000 Wyoming SE  
Kirtland AFB NM 87117.

## Customer service

Chapel, 846-5691  
CE 24-hour Help Desk, 846-8222  
Commissary, 846-9586  
Computer help, 846-5926  
Energy wasting, 846-4633  
Exchange Service, 266-9887  
Family Services, 846-0741  
Finance, 846-8045, 846-6639  
Law Enforcement Desk,  
846-7926, 846-7913  
Legal Services, 846-4217  
Medical Clinic, 846-3406  
Services Squadron, 853-7679

# NUCLEUS

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**the Friday before publication. Deadlines change for holidays.**

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**Classified:** Tuesday, noon call 892-9400  
or [observerclass@attglobal.net](mailto:observerclass@attglobal.net)

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Photo by Staff Sgt. Laura Holzer

Touring the 58th SOW

Lt. Col. Igor Svividov takes a picture of Lt. Col. Abzal Sulubekov (left) and Lt. Col. Rusian Kunurov (right) next to a H53 Pavelow helicopter. The colonels are a part of the Kazakhstan Air Force and toured the 58th Special Operations Wing as part of a partnership tour program sponsored by U.S. Central Command. The group toured special operations around the Air Force.

Bicycle riders must follow rules, laws on Kirtland AFB

Each year, there are about 800 bicycle-related deaths in the United States and another half a million bicycle-related injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms.

Studies have shown that using bicycle helmets can reduce head injuries by up to 85 percent. However, not all bicycle related injuries and deaths can be addressed by using safety equipment alone.

Rider actions and reactions—especially obeying traffic laws—play a major role in safe bicycling.

377th Security Forces patrols the base to ensure these “bicycle traffic laws” are enforced and will issue citations for noncompliance. So, make sure you know and follow the laws to ensure your safety as well as the safety of those around you.

The following are requirements for Kirtland AFB and covered in DOD Instruction 6055.4 and Air Force Instruction 31-204, Kirtland AFB Supplement 1:

★ **Protect your head.** All bike riders must wear an approved helmet.

★ **Be seen.** Riders will wear bright contrasting colors during the day and reflective gear at night.

★ **Biking at night:** If riding at night, equip your bicycle with a white headlight on front and a red reflector on the rear.

★ **Traffic laws:** Bike riders will obey all traffic rules that are applicable to vehicles. Riders will not cross the center line of the roadway and will ride single file on the far right side of the road.

★ **Use of headphones/earphones:** Never wear headphones, earphones, or other listening devices while riding a bike.

The following are safety tips from Consumer Product Safety Commission to help you bicycle safely:

★ **Stay alert,** keep a lookout for obstacles in your path.

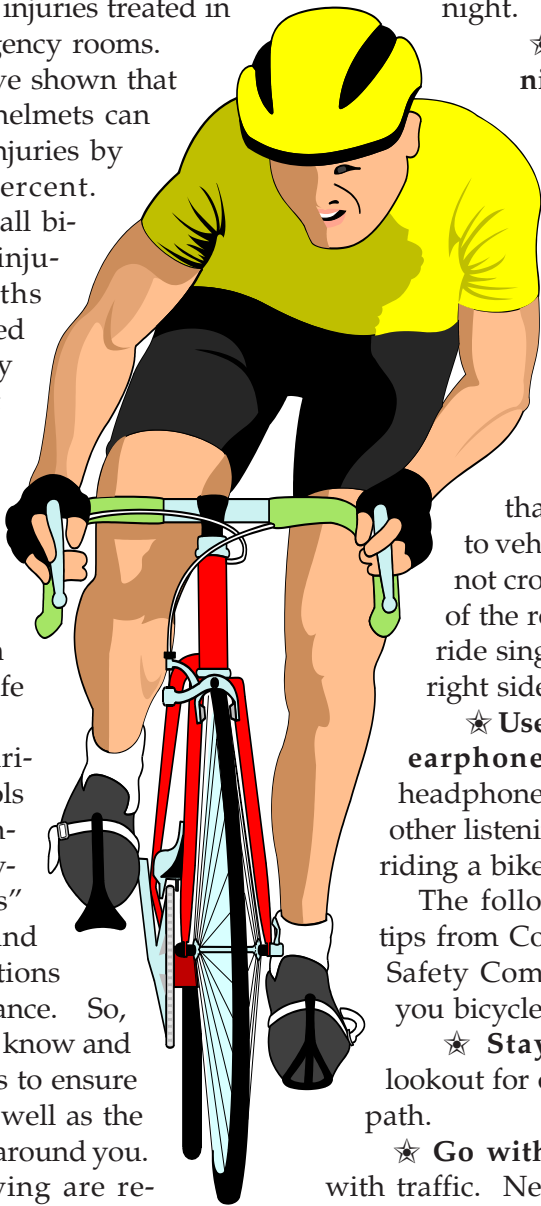
★ **Go with the flow,** ride with traffic. Never against traffic.

★ **Check for traffic,** be aware of traffic around you.

**Use proper hand signals** to indicate turns.

★ **Give the right of way** to pedestrians.

★ **Carry no passengers,** except on approved baby seats.



Promotion test change impacts deploying tech, master sergeants

Commanders of technical and master sergeants facing short notice deployments now have greater flexibility as to when their Airmen test for promotion.

New overseas manning requirements and the freezing of the Air Expeditionary Force cycle prompted officials here to adapt new procedures for deploying Airmen.

In the past, the number of Air-

men receiving deployment orders while in their testing window was small, said Ken Schwartz, chief of the test management section, Air Force Personnel Center, Randolph AFB, Texas. They were generally required to test before departing, providing they had access to study materials for at least 60 days.

“This cycle, we gave commanders a little more flexibility to say whether a person should test before

or after their deployment,” he said. “It seemed like the right thing to do to keep WAPS testing in sync with the acceleration of the AEF rhythm.”

Now, noncommissioned officers in the current test window, receiving short notice orders can have their commander delay testing if circumstances warrant, said Schwartz. Those who delay their testing will test out of cycle when they return.

Officials are also considering the merits of applying this change to those testing for staff sergeant May 1-31. However, no decision has been made.

For more information visit the career enhancement office at local military personnel flights or visit the enlisted promotions homepage at [www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/eprom/](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/eprom/).

Cost cut for Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance; coverage remains the same

The amount it costs military members pay to Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance and Family Member SGLI will be automatically reduced starting July 1.

Decreased mortality rates allow for the reductions of 1.5 cents for \$1,000 of coverage for military members and as much as a 42 percent decrease for spouse coverage. The premium for military members with \$250,000 of coverage will decrease from \$20 a month to \$16.25.

“The Veterans Administration

had a surplus partly because of the low number of claims, and they’ve decided to pass this surplus on to the service member,” said Scott Hand, chief of Air Force casualty operations, Air Force Personnel Center, Randolph AFB, Texas.

SGLI is the life insurance currently available to all members of the uniformed services. It is purchased by the Veterans Administration from a commercial life insurance company. Members on active duty, active duty for training or in-

active duty for training and members of the ready reserve are eligible for insurance through this program. SGLI is available for the member in \$10,000 increments up to a maximum of \$250,000.

Service members who carry any amount of coverage are also given \$10,000 of coverage for each dependent child at no cost. Those who decline SGLI coverage are not eligible for the dependent child coverage.

Similar to SGLI is the FSGLI for spouses of up to \$100,000. Partici-

pation in the FSGLI program is voluntary and cannot exceed the amount of coverage the military member carries.

People can have coverage restored, increased or reduced by filling out the proper paper work through the military personnel flight.

For more information on the SGLI or FSGLI programs, visit either the VA SGLI Web site at [www.insurance.va.gov](http://www.insurance.va.gov) or the Air Force Web site at <https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/casualty>.